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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/645,971	08/22/2003	Louis A. Rhodes	706441US3	8388

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EXAMINER

PEDDER, DENNIS H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3612

DATE MAILED: 02/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/645,971

Applicant(s)

RHODES ET AL.

Examiner

Dennis H. Pedder

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13, 15 and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 14, 16 and 18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/03, 1/04, 8/04.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 2-3, 5, 7-12, 15, 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 2, 3, etc. are indefinite for reciting movement without corresponding structure or means for the function. For example, the seat may be unbolted from the floor and moved as claimed.

Claim 5, etc. are indefinite for the negative limitation. Suggest claiming that the seat cushion is below the floor surface when stowed or that the seat back is substantially flush with the floor surface when stowed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

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4. Claims 1, 5, 6, 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Matthews.
5. Claims 1, 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Shimizu et al..
See figures 4-6.
6. Claims 1,5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(E) as being anticipated by Rudberg et al..
See leg pivots 169, 172.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).
9. Claims 2-4, 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mathews or Rudberg in view of Miyashita (cited by applicant as JP 411005477).

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Mathews and Rudberg use fixed pivots 19, 172, respectively. Miyashita teaches that a pivoting link 21 for a seat may be movable via a sliding joint 50 between positions 55 which are pivotal and positions therebetween which are not pivotal. Miyashita clears wheel wells or other vehicle layout as a result of this joint.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to provide in Mathews a pivotal joint as taught by Miyashita in order to clear obstructions to seat movement within the vehicle. As to claim 9, the positions between 55 is of a linear extent allowing multiple non-pivotal positions.

As to claim 10, member 50 is a pivotal lock.

10. Claims 2-4, 7-9 are further rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimizu et al. in view of Odagaki.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to provide in Shimizu et al. a lateral traversing structure as taught by Odagaki in order to provide multiple seat positions.

As to claim 3, it is common knowledge in this art to provide a recess sized appropriately to the seat. Hence, lateral movement yields, for this size of recess, a position where the seat cannot be pivoted into the recess.

As to claim 9, see the extent of the rails 306,308 of Odagaki.

11. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mathews in view of Rudberg et al..

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to provide in Mathews a cover 81 as taught by Rudberg et al. to form an extended load floor.

Allowable Subject Matter

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Waku et al. and Nishimura et al. are cited to show further link supported folding seats.

Allowable Subject Matter

13. Claims 14, 16, 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

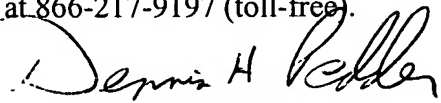
14. Claims 11, 15, 17 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dennis H. Pedder whose telephone number is (703) 308-2178. The examiner can normally be reached on 5:30-2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn D. Dayoan can be reached on (703) 308-3102. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Dennis H. Pedder
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3612

2/18/05

DHP

2/18/2005